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The Editor,
The Monthly Record

SIR—In your February Notes of the Month, under the heading "Science and Freedom", the writer expresses ideas which strike me as being rather questionable. To do nothing about the world situation, and to submit to the toppling of ideals accompanying it on the plea of being "realistic" is, in my opinion, to make a poor show. Surely humanists should join with others to bring about a peaceful relationship with our "potential enemies"? And who are those potential enemies? Is Yugoslavia one of them? Of course not. We must not be stampeded into believing that "Communism" covers every possible hostile element.

If the profession of Humanism means a watering-down of the imperishable ideals of Mill in the interest of passing exigencies, I for one will have none of it.

Pacifists and Quakers may not be "realistic" (whatever that means), but they are at least to be honoured for refusing to compromise with their principles in times of peril. I am not a Communist.

Yours truly,
ERIC A. MCDONALD

DEAR SIR—On page five of your March issue it is stated: "A religion without a creed is obviously a religion without a church". With respect, this statement is inaccurate. Unitarianism is essentially "a religion without a creed", yet it has its churches up and down the country. The basic policy of a Unitarian church is that no member or minister shall be askd to subscribe to any creed, doctrine, or article of faith whatsoever. I am a member of a Unitarian church and on its committee. Were I asked to subscribe to any creed, I would immediately resign from membership. To me, intellectual freedom is absolute.

Yours truly,
O. B. DEAKIN

South Place News

ELLA PLAISTOWE IVIMEY (1883—1952)

ELLA IVIMEY was the youngest of eight children of a distinguished musical family of Spanish descent, of whom Joseph, the eldest, conductor and composer, and John, Doctor of Music, and Ella herself are perhaps the best known. Other members include a chorister of the Chapel Royal, an organist, a 'cellist, and the talent still persists to the fourth generation.

Ella could not remember not being able to play the piano. Joseph taught her the violin, in which she succeeded so well that at the age of thirteen she played the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto at a concert in Surbiton. An exhibition took her to the Guildhall School of Music, where she studied the violin, piano and composition. She was to be a violinist, so Joseph sent her off to Prague to study under Sevcik, who made his pupils practice eight hours a day. This eventually overstrained her left hand and she had to give up the violin.

For two years Ella as pianist and Margel Gluck, a fellow violin pupil of Sevcik, toured America. On her return, Ella set up as accompanist, making the best of her small hands. She led a very active life, teaching, coaching, rehearsing with vocalists and instumentalists, and, more recently,

setting songs, many of which have been published by Augeners. She thus worked with most of the great musicians, for example, Szigeti and Casals, and she toured with Suggia. She is best known, perhaps as accompanist to Melba, with whom she toured the British Isles. She was an excellent accompanist; she had the musical knowledge, the technical ability, the sympathy and the necessary selflessness which gave way to the other artist. A story is told how on one occasion Gervase Elwes handed her the music for an encore which she had not seen before. All went well and afterwards she showed him that two pages were missing. He was so impressed with her improvisation that he led her back to the audience and explained what had happened.

She first played at a South Place Concert on February 18, 1917, in the days when nearly every programme included a vocalist. After that date hardly a season passed without Ella playing, often more than once, until the grand total of her appearances was sixty-seven. On sixteen of these occasions she accompanied her friend Dorothea Webb, on others, Arthur Cranmer, John Goss, Sophie Wyss, Tatiana Makushina, Gwen Catley, and many more.

She became the pianist for the South Place Ethical Society late in 1939 and thereafter until she was taken ill in October 1951. She was invited to join the Concert Committee in 1945 and served to the end. She was asked several times to write about her life, but could not believe that anybody wished to read about her. Finally she wrote a short account which appeared in *The Monthly Record* for September 1951. She highly valued her connection, ethical and musical, with South Place, and for our part we held in great esteem her talent, her hard work and sincerity of purpose and her simple, modest and lovable nature. Her brother, Walter, says of her: "She had no guile."

F. M. H.

The funeral at Golders Green Crematorium took place on March 6. Mr. Hawton, who conducted the service paid the following tribute: Ella Ivimey originally intended to become a violinist. An injury to her hand first caused her to turn from the violin to the piano. Her career was remarkably successful, and her talent won the recognition of those who were eminently qualified to judge. She toured Britain as an accompanist to Melba, and one remark which Melba made to her throws a significant light on her character. "You never leave anything to chance", Melba said. A similar tribute was paid by Casals, and, indeed, everyone who watched her at work must have been struck by the extraordinary thoroughness and attention to detail which she applied to every performance, whether the audience was large or small. She was an artist, loyal to the highest standards of her difficult art—and loyal too to those who were privileged to be her friends. The South Place Ethical Society for which she acted as an accompanist and pianist on Sunday mornings since the beginning of the war, is conscious of this double loss: a highly gifted artist whose love of music was so deep that it infected even the unmusical, and a gracious and charming and wholly unaffected personality, whose interests were wide, and who cared for all things of the mind. We are all grateful to her for the moments of beauty which her art gave to us—and perhaps by that she herself would best wish to be remembered. Yet we cannot forget the courage with which she bore the cruel illness that struck her down. We derive strength to face ourselves whatever must be faced from the example of fortitude of those who pass into the shadow-side of life. In that last battle they do more for us than they know. They pass on to those who follow something of the quality of their own endurance.

H. H.